

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday August 1st 2021

EJ1E Bere Island

Gerard EI5KF sends a first report about last week's IOTA contest. The Avondhu Radio Club with the callsign EJ1E activated Bere Island EU-121, using an Icom7300 and a compact Elecraft amplifier feeding a set of dipoles suspended from a tall portable mast. Operating outdoors under a cloudless sky with a sunshade for protection, EJ1E got busy for 12 hours as a Single Op in the High Power section. He reports good conditions on 80, 40 and 20m, logging JH and VK, and even Brazil on 80m amongst nearly 1100 contacts made during a busy IOTA weekend, so next year it will be a Multi-OP entry.

Caribbean Jamming

Reports by US American hams suggest that Cuban jamming stations generate several evenly spaced signals on the lower end of 40m. Nicknamed “The Cuban Rum Runner”, in reference to the similar sounding Soviet 'woodpecker' of yesteryear, it appeared after recent anti-government protestes in Cuba. It is unclear what purpose is being served, but DX spots suggests that Cuban stations are active in the ssb segment and on FT8, although in smaller numbers than usual.

SSTV from the International Space Station

Cosmonauts aboard the ISS will use the SSTV Modus PD-120 for transmission of images on 145,800 MHz FM. Subject to change, they will be bridging the vacuum on Friday, the 6th of August between 10:50 and 19:10 UTC, and again on Saturday the 7th of August from 09:50 UTC until 15:55 UTC. RSØISS should be audible with a regular vhf handheld and a 1/4wave antenna, but keep in mind that there will be some doppler shift.

RFI from water

Devices called 'Wassermatrix', sold by a Swiss company by the same name have been identified as the source of interferences around 144.015 MHz across European countries. The manufacturer claims it will “vitalize”, “structure” or “energize” water,

thus making drinking water healthier and curing a wide span of diseases from oncologic and virologic to orthopaedic kinds. Following complaints, those devices has now been banned from sale in Germany after an investigation by the local communications regulator. Reports include direct identification of devices near Frankfurt airport. The devices use an unstable power oscillator around 144.015Mhz with a wide noise skirt, and produce 20 Watts output over periods of five minutes. Strong overtones can be heard at 288 and 432 MHz. For the user of the 'purifier' this translates into a calculated EMF exposure of about 28Volt/meter, enough to possibly upset a heart pacemaker.

Some club news

All are welcome to call in to the Antrim and District Amateur Radio Club activating GB2CW on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 7pm on 145.250MHz FM. For details, email [mi0wwb /at/ btinternet.com](mailto:mi0wwb@btinternet.com)

Bushvalley Amateur Radio Club has its Tuesday net from 8.30pm on 145.300MHz FM and their email is [bushvalleyarc /at/ gmail.com](mailto:bushvalleyarc@gmail.com)

And the Mid Ulster Amateur Radio Club will hold a Zoom meeting next Tuesday. To join, contact Dave, 2I0SJV via email to [dcparkinson /at/ icloud.com](mailto:dcparkinson@icloud.com)

With Lower VHF across the Atlantic

EI7GL reports on ei7gl.blogspot.com that only four days after posting about the Experimental 40 MHz station WL2XUP, it was soon heard across the Atlantic in the southeast of England by Paul G7PUV, using an SDRPlay RSP1A and a W4KMA 18-100MHz Log Periodic beam with a 6.2M boom at a height of 15m. He heard seven WSPR transmissions between 19:40 and 20:42 UTC and the strongest signal was -16dB. The owner of WL2XUP is Lin, NI4Y. He writes: "I can report that VE3QC and VE2DLC received my station via E skip on July 22nd. Shortly after VE3QC received my signal, G7PUV received WL2XUP via multi hop E skip. The following day KI4RVH received the WSPR signal via what was likely tropo ducting. VE3QC also reports hearing my FT8 signals transmitted later in the day on July 23rd."

John, EI7GL writes that the 40 MHz trans-Atlantic opening coincided with a big opening on 50 MHz between Europe and North America. As NI4Y points out, this was very likely to be a multi-hop Sporadic-E opening across the North Atlantic with maybe 3-4 hops involved. What is significant about this reception report is not so much the distance but the fact that this is the first crossing of the Atlantic on the 40 MHz band. During Sporadic-E openings on 50 MHz, it's very likely that paths on

lower frequencies like 40 MHz will be open as well.

On the same date, SWL Paul Logan in Lisnaskea in Co.Fermanagh managed to catch a short 5-minute opening on the 88 to 108 Mhz FM broadcast band, hearing stations from the the state of Maine in the northeast of the USA. The three stations he identified are operating with 20-35kw, and the distance is around 4350 km.

DX News

The DXRI0FF team arrived in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. After a stopover at Korsakov they went to Iturup island by ship, arriving and setting up last Tuesday. The Russian Robinson team are RZ3EC, R6MG, M0MSV, RX3F, RN3BL and R6LGT. They are active from Iturup island AS-025 as RI0FF until the 3rd of August.

Michael, OY/DF8AN is on the air from the Faroe Islands EU-018 until the 8th of August. He is using 80 to 6m. Recent DX spots OY/DF8AN, and QSL is via his home call.

With just 100 Watt SSB and a Dipole, Bruce ZL1AAO is activating two islands during his DXepedition. From the 7th of August for a couple of days from Atiu Island OC-083, and then from Rarotonga OC-913 on most HF bands until the 19th of August. QSL info and a log can be found on the ZL1AA0 QRZ.com page

Taking island hopping a step further, here the itinery of Yann, FO/F1SMB visiting seven French Polynesia islands until the 23rd of August. He is currently QRV from Moorea OC-046. And from the 6th onward he plans to operate for a few days each from Tahaa OC-067, Bora Bora OC-067, Tikehau OC-066, Rangiroa OC-066, Fakarava OC-066, and finally from Tahiti OC-046. He works QRP on SSB and FT8, mainly on 7.090, 7.055, 7.074 Mhz and also on 14.285, 14.260, 14.074 MHz. QSL via F1SMB for SSB and eQSL for SSB & FT8.

Alex, DD5ZZ is on air as OA7/DD5ZZ from the Peruvian region of Cuzco since the 30th of July. He'll stay until the 17th of September, operating SSB, FT8, FT4 and some CW on 40-6 metres. Contesters can work him as OA7/5P6G during the WAE DX CW contest on the 14th and 15th of August. QSL via his home call, LoTW and Club Log's OQRS

Contests

For those listening to this bulletin on Sunday: You can try to catch some South African stations in today's SARL phone contest on 80, 40 and 20m, starting at 1400

UTC. Information can be found on their website www.sarl.org.za

Expect to hear many female voices during the 1 hour Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest on 160 to 6m. Starting at 0100 UTC this Tuesday, this contest favours female hams: contacts with an OM are worth 1 point, for YLs it's 5 points, and even higher scores for young participants under the age of 26. Have a look at their unusual rules on their website wwsac.com

VHF and UHF FT8 users can let their computers do the talking during the upcoming european FT8 contests. The first leg for 2m happens this Wednesday, the 4th of August between 1700-2000 UTC. The first leg for 70cm is scheduled for the 11th, also for 3 hours, starting at 1700 UTC.

With a focus on northern Europe, the Norwegian Contest Academy will run their annual 10m contest this Thursday, the 5th of August. There are four categories starting at 1700UTC with CW, followed by an hour each for SSB, FM and digital modes. Info about the Norwegian Contest Academy can be found on the net at nrrlcontest.no

Notoriously slow to announce official results, the CQWW160 meter contest now lists our top scorers for Ireland as EI5KG, EI2CN and EI5KF in the CW sections, and EI5GUB, EI4KU and EI6JK in the SSB Sections of those 48 hours marathons earlier this year.

The Propagation Horoscope

Average propagation conditions are to be expected for the next week, with the solar flux going below 80, and no new sunspots or coronal holes being observed on the sun's farside. Sporadic E will slowly decline during August, but will be helped along by the three dust streams coming from the Perseides, the Delta Aquariides and the Alpha Capricornides delivering longlived iron splinters for ionisation trails. HF conditions should remain steady, with good daytime E Layer openings on the higher bands, occasionally up to 6m. The lower bands should also produce good DX in the absense of QRN from lightning storms.

That is the news for this week. Items for inclusion in next week's radio news can be submitted by email to newsteam@irts.ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. The deadline is midnight on Thursday.

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